



## News release

### Questions and Answers on the weather this week

21 November 2005

#### Q What is happening with the weather this week?

A It has been cold for several days now with widespread frosts. We will see a further change later this week as a very cold northerly wind blasts straight from the Arctic. This will make it feel much colder and bring the possibility of snow to most areas. However, the fog problems will disappear as the wind picks up through the week.

#### Q What areas are affected?

All parts of the UK could see some snow, at some point Thursday through to Saturday. At this stage, northern and eastern Scotland and Northern Ireland look like getting the worst of the weather, but forecasters are also monitoring the situation as places like Wales could experience disruption due to the weather. Blizzard conditions may exist for a time over higher ground.

#### Q. How much snow are we talking about?

A Up to 20 cm could fall over high ground, but with strong winds giving blizzard conditions, widespread drifting of the snow is likely. At lower levels, where many of us live, a covering of snow is possible anywhere, with 2 to 5 cm in the worst-affected areas.

#### Q. What do you mean by worst-affected areas?

A. Wind direction is crucial in this type of situation. At this stage the most vulnerable places will be north-east Scotland, the Midlands and parts of Wales and the south-west.

#### Q. What will the temperature be doing?

A. Temperatures will remain low this week with widespread night-time frosts. Generally, at nights we should see the thermometer dipping to around zero to -2 °C in the cities (and even colder in rural areas) with daytime temperatures reaching a high of around 3 to 4 °C. On Friday, it will feel more like -5 to -10 °C in most of the towns and cities across the UK due to the strength of the wind.

#### Q. What advice are you giving?

A. The Met Office is working with other agencies and Government departments to help mitigate the effects of the cold weather. Individuals should always check the latest weather forecast on the Met Office website or through the media. It's also very important to check the up-to-date travel conditions.

#### Q. Is this the start of the cold winter that you have been forecasting?

A. It is certainly consistent with the 'colder than normal winter' that we said has a 65% chance of occurring this year. This blast of cold northerly and easterly winds, rather than the usual mild Atlantic air, is the sort of pattern we expect to occur more frequently this winter. There will be milder interludes in coming weeks, but these are not expected to be as prolonged as in recent winters. A cold winter is not based on one cold snap. It does depend on how many there are and how long the cold periods last. Having such a cold snowy spell over much of the UK this early is certainly unusual but it is too early to confirm our predictions for the winter as a whole.

#### Q Does this mean a cold snowy Christmas?

A It is far too early to say. It is possible that Christmas could coincide with a milder interlude and it is foolish to forecast daily predictions from a cold winter signal. At best we will be able to give some guidance concerning Christmas about seven to ten days ahead.

If you or your business is likely to be affected by the weather this week, continue to check out the Met Office web site or call [Weathercall](#) for a detailed forecast for your area.

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